

Species

LSU Museum of Natural Science published new 15 species on Amazonian birds

Brithvi V

Department of Pharmaceutical Technology, Anna University, BIT Campus, Trichy, Tamil Nadu, India

Correspondence to: Department of Pharmaceutical Technology, Anna University, BIT Campus, Trichy, Tamil Nadu, India

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The Louisiana Museum of Natural History is the state's museum of natural history located on the campus of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. It houses the LSU Museum of Natural Science, the LSU Herbarium, and the Louisiana State Arthropod Museum which contains approximately 1,200,000 specimens of insects and related arthropods, and the Textile and Costume Museum. An international team of researchers coordinated by ornithologist Bret Whitney of the LSU Museum of Natural Science, or LSUMNS, recently published 15 species of birds previously unknown to science. Birds are the best-known group of vertebrates, so describing a large number of uncataloged species of birds in this day and age is unexpected. Amazonian Birds live in the Amazon, the world's largest rainforest and river basin, home to one out of every ten known species. Over 1,300 of these species are types of birds which accounts for one-third of all bird species in the world. Technological advances such as satellite imagery, digital recordings of vocalizations, DNA analysis and high-powered computation power have taken the age of discovery to the next level, and were key ingredients in the discovery of these new species. However, such discoveries still depend on exploration of remote areas of the Amazon rainforest, just as they did a century ago, and this sort of fieldwork has been carried out by the LSUMNS every year since the early 1960s. Most of the new species were discovered by Whitney and Cohn-Haft by detecting differences in their songs and calls in the field.

REFERENCE

1. Louisiana State University (2013, August 28). Fifteen new species of Amazonian birds. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved September 19, 2013, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2013/08/130828173115.htm>